



**National Response Plan and National Incident Management System  
Review and Revision Process  
Stakeholder Meeting  
Wednesday, October 25, 2006**

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**NRP KEY REVISION ISSUES**

**DERIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING  
HURRICANE KATRINA LESSONS LEARNED REPORTS:**

**Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, OIG-06-32, “*A Performance Review of FEMA’s Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina*,” March 2006.**

**United States Government Accountability Office, “*Catastrophic Disasters: Enhanced Leadership, Capabilities, and Accountability Controls Will Improve the Effectiveness of the Nation’s Preparedness, Response, and Recovery System*,” September 2006.**

**United States House of Representatives, “*A Failure of Initiative, Final Report of the Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation and Response to Hurricane Katrina*,” February 2006.**

**United States Senate, Report of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, “*A Nation Still Unprepared*,” May 2006.**

**The White House, “*The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned*,” February 2006.**

**Note: All entries are direct quotes from the above-referenced documents.**



## **NRP Key Revision Issues**

1. Clarify Roles and Responsibilities of Key Structures/Positions/Levels of Government
2. Review JFO structure and operations
3. Strengthen role of States and Private Sector under the NRP
4. Strengthen External Affairs (ESF-15) and Public Affairs Annexes
5. Refine the NRP-Catastrophic Incident Supplement to include the review of a possible increased DoD responsibility
6. Ensure consistency between NRP and new National Emergency Communications Strategy
7. Review Public Safety and Security roles and missions
8. Review coordinating and supporting agencies for all annexes
9. Improve process for identifying and accepting donated goods
10. Ensure the integration of all Federal search and rescue assets
11. Clarify international support mechanisms
12. Incorporate companion animal issues
13. Integrate NIMS concepts, principles, terminology, systems, and organizational processes into the revised NRP
14. Incorporate proactive planning for incidents that render State and local governments incapable of an effective response

## **ISSUE #1: CLARIFY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STRUCTURES/POSITIONS/LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT**

*“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,” White House*

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#### ***Meeting Victims’ Needs***

**Lesson Learned:** The Federal response should better integrate the contributions of volunteers and nongovernmental organizations into the broader national effort. This integration would be best achieved at the State and local levels, prior to future incidents. In particular, State and local governments must engage NGOs in the planning process, credential their personnel, and provide them the necessary resource support for their involvement in a joint response.

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#### ***Unity of Effort among Active Duty Forces and the National Guard***

In the overall response to Hurricane Katrina, separate command structures for active duty military and the National Guard hindered their unity of effort. U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) commanded active duty forces, while each State government commanded its National Guard forces. For the first two days of Katrina response operations, USNORTHCOM did not have situational awareness of what forces the National Guard had on the ground. Joint Task Force Katrina (JTF-Katrina) simply could not operate at full efficiency when it lacked visibility of over half the military forces in the disaster area. Neither the Louisiana National Guard nor JTF-Katrina had a good sense for where each other’s forces were located or what they were doing. For example, the JTF-Katrina Engineering Directorate had not been able to coordinate with National Guard forces in the New Orleans area. As a result, some units were not immediately assigned missions matched to on-the-ground requirements. Further, FEMA requested assistance from DOD without knowing what State National Guard forces had already deployed to fill the same needs.

Also, the Commanding General of JTF-Katrina and the Adjutant Generals (TAGs) of Louisiana and Mississippi had only a coordinating relationship, with no formal command relationship established. This resulted in confusion over roles and responsibilities between National Guard and Federal forces and highlights the need for a more unified command structure.

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#### ***Creating a Culture of Preparedness***

The second element of our continuing transformation for homeland security perhaps will be the most profound and enduring—the creation of a Culture of Preparedness. A new preparedness culture must emphasize that the entire Nation—Federal, State, and local governments; the private sector; communities; and individual citizens—shares common goals and responsibilities for homeland security. In other words, our homeland security is built upon a foundation of partnerships. And these partnerships must include shared understanding of at least four concepts:

- The certainty of future catastrophes;
- The importance of initiative;
- The roles of citizens and other homeland security stakeholders in preparedness; and

- The roles of each level of government and the private sector in creating a prepared Nation.

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### ***Other Homeland Security Stakeholders and Preparedness***

We must build upon our initial successful efforts to partner with other homeland security stakeholders—namely the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and faith-based groups. Each of these groups plays a critical role in preparedness. To the extent that we can incorporate them into the National effort, we will be reducing the burden on other response resources so that Federal, State, and local responders can concentrate our energies on those with the greatest need.

Private sector companies own and operate 85 percent of our Nation’s critical infrastructure. Transportation, electricity, banking, telecommunications, food supply, and clean water are examples of services relying on infrastructure that have become basic aspects of our daily lives. Yet, these services are often only noticed when they are disrupted and when the American public expects speedy restoration. In fact, the Nation relies on “critical infrastructure” to maintain its defense, continuity of government, economic prosperity, and quality of life. The services provided by these interconnected systems are so vital that their disruption will have a debilitating impact on national security, the economy, or public health and safety. Companies are responsible for protecting their systems, which comprise the majority of critical infrastructure. Because of this, private sector preparation and response is vital to mitigating the national impact of disasters. Government actions in response to a disaster can help or hamper private sector efforts. However, governments cannot plan to adequately respond unless the private sector helps them understand what infrastructure truly is critical. Likewise, businesses cannot develop contingency plans without understanding how governments will respond. To maximize the Nation’s preparedness, Federal, State, and local governments must join with the private sector to collaboratively develop plans to respond to major disasters. There are important initiatives in this area already underway by the Business Round Table (BRT) and Business Executives for National Security (BENS) project. We must encourage and build upon these efforts. The private sector must be an explicit partner in and fully integrated across all levels of response—Federal, State, and local.

Non-governmental organizations play essential roles in preparedness by complementing and supporting preparedness efforts. In times of crisis, NGOs—especially community groups, faith-based organizations, places of worship, and relief organizations—provide essential human faces, helping hands, compassion, and comfort to all American people, whether or not they are victims of an incident. As such, they fill an essential need in the response system in ways far beyond the capacity of the Government. Thus, their contributions must be fully integrated at all levels—Federal, State, and local.

### ***The Role of Each Level of Government in a Culture of Preparedness***

Today, we operate under two guiding principles: a) that incident management should begin at the lowest jurisdictional level possible, and b) that, for most incidents, the Federal government will generally play a supporting role to State and local efforts. While these principles suffice for the vast majority of incidents, they impede the Federal response to severe catastrophes. In a catastrophic scenario that overwhelms or incapacitates local and State incident command

structures, the Federal government must be prepared to assume incident command and get assistance directly to those in need until State and local authorities are reconstituted.

The National Preparedness System must also recognize the role of the Federal government for monitoring and guiding national preparedness efforts. In particular, the system must ensure that the Federal government assesses the preparedness of localities across the country with an eye towards identifying the Federal response requirement for each. In addition, Federal, State, local, and private sector partners must agree on a system in which the Federal government responds more actively and effectively while respecting the role of State and local governments.

The new culture of preparedness must stress *partnership* among all levels of government. Local governments will continue to have responsibility for providing the immediate response capabilities for the vast majority of incidents while State governors will continue to have sovereign responsibilities to protect their residents. Yet preparedness must emphasize the shared nature of these responsibilities in a catastrophic event. State governments must work with their local jurisdictions to ensure that they have developed plans and capabilities that are appropriate for the homeland security challenges confronting them. Both State and local governments must also reach out to their citizens, private sector, and community groups to promote their preparedness efforts.

Furthermore, in the new culture of preparedness, State and local governments must continually seek to work with their neighboring jurisdictions. Building upon the successes of interstate cooperation programs such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), the Federal government must take an active role in encouraging and facilitating these partnerships. Regional collaboration at the State and local levels will help the Nation to reduce overlapping or redundant capabilities as well as to minimize capability gaps. Moreover, active regional collaboration will likewise be a means for identifying and sharing homeland security lessons learned and best practices.

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**5. Each Regional Director should have significant expertise and experience, core competency in emergency preparedness and incident management, and demonstrated leadership ability.** The Regional Director should have full situational awareness of all events, risks, and response capabilities within the region. When an event occurs in the region, the Regional Director should be ready to become the PFO and should coordinate or direct as appropriate the Federal response assets deployed within the operational area. The Regional Director as PFO should establish and direct the Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC). These Regional Directors will comprise the professional PFO cadre and receive initial and ongoing PFO training.

**6. The PFO should have the authority to execute responsibilities and coordinate Federal response assets.** The PFO should have the same authority as an FCO to manage and coordinate the Federal response to a disaster. The PFO should have the authority to make any operational decisions necessary, within the law, without having to obtain approval from headquarters. Giving the PFO this authority could be accomplished without a change to the Stafford Act by simply designating the PFO as an FCO. Alternatively, the Secretary of Homeland Security or

the FEMA Director could delegate their authority to oversee FCO to the PFO. This action does not require demoting FCO's within a particular region to Deputy FCOs. The FCO will retain all current authorities under the Stafford Act and will report through the PFO. An incident covering multiple states will require multiple FCOs operating concurrently under the command of the PFO.

**7. Each Homeland Security Region must be able to establish a self-sufficient, initial JFO anywhere within the region.** The rapid establishment of a JFO is the keystone to effective Federal emergency response. It is critical that each Region have the resources, equipment, and personnel to establish a JFO after a major disaster. This JFO should be built using available State, local, and/or National Guard infrastructure. It should also be built in such a way that Federal officials can collaborate with their State and local counterparts and thereby better complement their response operations. The JFO must also be completely self-sufficient, with food, water, power, communications equipment, and housing for personnel, to enable deployment to areas where critical infrastructure are damaged or destroyed. To the extent possible for an anticipated event, the organization of the JFO should begin before the event. For a no-notice event, each region should have the ability to establish an initial JFO within 12 hours. To assist in this effort, each region should pre-identify JFO locations in areas with large populations. The ability to establish a JFO after a major disaster directly enhances the Federal government's ability to maintain continuity of operations (COOP). Each regional JFO should also identify and conduct exercises at their respective COOP sites.

**8. Each region must be able to establish and resource rapidly deployable, self-sustaining incident management teams (IMT) to execute the functions of the JFO and subordinate area commands that are specified in the NRP and NIMS.** The regional headquarters should create IMT's that can rapidly respond to a disaster with robust, deployable communication packages and assist in establishing the command and control structures required in NIMS and the NRP. IMTs should be composed of experts in ICS who can establish a command for the Federal response to connect with State and local response structures during disasters and large-scale events. IMTs should maintain certification in all levels of ICS for each ICS command element.

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**11. DHS should establish a permanent standing planning/operations staff housed within the National Operations Center** (see recommendation #15). This body would evaluate the integration of Federal department and agency plans to ensure they align with resource availability. This group would replace the IIMG and be charged with coordinating national-level support to a region or multiple regions during a catastrophe, and staff interagency operational and policy decisions raised to the Disaster Response Group

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**15. Establish a National Operations Center to coordinate the National response and provide situational awareness and a common operating picture for the entire Federal government.** This interagency center will allow for National-level coordination of Federal/State/local response to major domestic incidents. This center will combine, co-locate, and replace the situational awareness mission of the Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC), the operational mission of the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) and

the role of the IIMG, and be staffed with full time detailed employees assigned to a planning cell from relevant departments and agencies. Staffed and managed by interagency officials, it will also provide situational awareness and a common operating picture on a real-time basis during a domestic emergency for the White House and all agencies. All department and agency command centers will provide information to the National Operations Center (NOC), which will develop a National common operating picture capable of being exported to the White House Situation Room and other Federal operations centers as necessary. The National Operations Center should be located and designed to meet the requirements of Enduring Constitutional Government. DHS will serve as the Executive Agent for the NOC and it will function as a true interagency command center.

**16. Establish a National Information and Knowledge Management System.** Departments and agencies, working with the NOC and the Program Manager for Information Sharing, should develop a national system of information management to provide a common operating picture which allows for the processing and timely provisioning of interagency information sources (*e.g.* DOD National Military Command System, National Counterterrorism Center, FBI Strategic Information Operations Center). These information sources should be viewable at all Federal operation centers utilizing compatible geo-spatial information systems, and should operate on both classified (SIPRNET) and unclassified systems to allow State and local emergency management interface and integration.

**18. Establish National Information Requirements and a National Information Reporting Chain.** Departments and agencies, through the NOC, should develop information requirements at each level of the incident command structure to ensure that valuable, accurate information is reported in a timely manner. A national reporting chain should be established to ensure a standard information flow through all levels of the incident command structure.

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**49 c. Specify that the Attorney General will, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, designate the SFLEO.** When the Secretary of Homeland Security declares an Incident of National Significance (INS), the Attorney General should promptly designate the SFLEO; during a non-INS event, the Attorney General may appoint an SFLEO if needed. Also, the NRP should give the Attorney General the authority to designate a Deputy SFLEO from a department other than that of the SFLEO. In recognition of the Secretary of Homeland Security's role in coordinating the Federal response under HSPD-5, the Attorney General should consult with the Secretary prior to designating the SFLEO.

**49 d. Include a new position designated as the "Senior Civilian Representative of the Attorney General" (SCRAG).** As with the SFLEO, the Attorney General should immediately appoint the SCRAG to serve as the Attorney General's representative for issues requiring senior-level involvement of a DOJ official. whereas the SFLEO is responsible for managing the operational aspects of the Federal law enforcement response, the SCRAG will assist as needed in resolving any significant law enforcement policy issues that might arise with State or local officials, or between Federal official.

## **Pages 110-111**

**78 b. Strengthen the role and responsibility of the Infrastructure Liaison.** Currently, the Infrastructure Liaison is designated by DHS/IP, to serve as the principal advisor to the JFO Coordination Group regarding all national and regional level critical infrastructure and key resource incident-related issues. This role should be more clearly defined, and have greater responsibility which should include a designated group of trained critical infrastructure staff from Federal departments and agencies including DHS staff versed in infrastructure protection that are available for immediate deployment to the JFO to fill the role of the expanded Infrastructure Liaison group. The liaison should: (1) Gather and fuse relevant data about private infrastructure operational status; (2) Coordinate overall Federal response efforts for infrastructure restoration and recovery; and (3) Strengthen direct communications with private infrastructure owners and operators. This expanded Infrastructure Liaison will incorporate the Private Sector Liaisons to ensure unity of effort.

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Lesson Learned: The Federal response should better integrate the contributions of volunteers and nongovernmental organizations into the broader national effort. This integration would be best achieved at the State and local levels, prior to future incidents. In particular, State and local governments must engage NGOs in the planning process, credential their personnel, and provide them the necessary resource support for their involvement in a joint response.

## **Recommendation:**

**98. DHS should revise the NRP to designate responsibility for coordinating non-governmental assistance, including faith-based organizations, during emergencies.** These responsibilities should fully address the following:

- a. Improve communication of requirements from the incident site;
- b. Pre-identify and catalogue non-governmental goods and build a process to deploy these goods to specific regions for catastrophic events;
- c. Develop a statewide support function for volunteers (both pre-trained and spontaneous) in each State to assist local emergency managers and NGOs to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters;
- d. Recruit, train and identify National Incident Management System (NIMS) trained volunteers;
- e. Incorporate NGOs into the planning, training, and exercising process; and
- f. Ensure there is a mechanism to coordinate spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers.

## ***“A Failure of Initiative,” United States House of Representatives***

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Finding: Federal agencies, including DHS, had varying degrees of unfamiliarity with their roles and responsibilities under the NRP and National Incident Management System (NIMS). It has become clear the response to Katrina was not unified and coordination among local, state, and federal authorities failed in several areas. The NRP and NIMS serve as a preestablished unified command structure for response to such a catastrophic incident. In order to seamlessly execute the NRP, each agency needs to develop effective operating procedures essential to satisfying that agency's roles and responsibilities under the NRP and NIMS.



Some agencies had well developed standard operating procedures while others had none at all. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Transportation had previously developed significant operating procedures that covered agency responsibilities under the NRP. Both agencies had used these operating procedures during training exercises to ensure an understanding of operating procedures prior to real time application.<sup>86</sup> These agencies executed their responsibilities under the NRP fairly well. Other agencies lack sufficient operating procedures for their responsibilities under the NRP. Many, when asked for operating procedures, referred to related sections of the NRP. Since the NRP is not an operational plan, this led to problems with execution of Emergency Support Function (ESF) responsibilities. While DOD, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Coast Guard performed admirably in many respects, there were problems adequately coordinating their activities with other federal, state, and local agencies through the NRP structure.

***“A Performance Review of FEMA’s Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina,” DHS Office of Inspector General***

**Pages 24-25**

The roles and responsibilities of the HSOC and the IIMG should be clarified. ...Under the NRP, a key role of the IIMG is to provide decision-making support to top and senior officials during an incident. However, rather than provide policy advice to top officials during the exercise, the IIMG was under pressure from senior federal officials to provide situational information and address lower level coordination issues that should have been part of HSOC’s role.

Co-located with the HSOC, during Hurricane Katrina the IIMG established operational hours, fulfilled requests for situational information, and created routine reports. IIMG members we interviewed said that the senior officials on the IIMG served as a reporting cell to DHS leadership and the White House, running parallel functions with the HSOC. Doubling the headquarters level information collection effort to include both the HSOC and the IIMG burdened response operations at the JFO and the NRCC, which began hiring contractors to manage information requests. DHS needs to consider revising the respective roles of the IIMG and HSOC. The disaster response role of the IIMG is not new; it replaces the Catastrophic Disaster Response Group that served as the policy-level interagency coordination entity under the Federal Response Plan. The NRCC and JFO also fulfill roles that previously existed under that plan. DHS should clarify how it intends to integrate these entities with the HSOC, which has the primary role of collecting operational and situational information for DHS headquarters.

**Recommendation 1:**

We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Operations Coordination, clarify the National Response Plan guidelines for federal, headquarters-level collection and synthesis of situational and operational information, with the intent of eliminating duplication of effort between the Interagency Incident Management Group and Homeland Security Operations Center.

**Pages 28-29**

Effective September 21, 2005, the Acting Under Secretary for EP&R designated the PFO as FCO for the states of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. This action sanctioned the shift toward a greater directive role for the PFO in the response. Several officials commented that the eventual blending of PFO and FCO authorities suggests an unnecessary division within the NRP. Others added that the FCO's statutory authorities as the representative of the President fully encompass the PFO role. Further, if one justification for a PFO is to reduce the non-operational burden of the FCO, such as public and media relations, combining the roles defeats the purpose. Moreover, inconsistent use of PFOs for some affected states and not others added to the confusion. For example, one FEMA region delegated Disaster Recovery Manager authority to the PFO/FCO while another region did not, which provided different financial authorities and responsibilities in Louisiana than in Mississippi and Alabama. Many senior FEMA officials viewed consolidating roles as necessary in Louisiana, but were neutral on the subject in Alabama. Both state and FEMA officials said it had a less than positive effect in Mississippi. They disagreed with the change because the consolidation created regional leadership for the response when many issues were state-specific, such as the type of damage and long-term housing. State officials said that a single federal official should not hold responsibilities for more than one state and that consolidation delayed the approval of Mississippi requests to add additional counties and types of disaster assistance for weeks.

**Recommendation 2:**

We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Policy, clarify the roles of the Principal Federal Official, the Federal Coordinating Officer, the Federal Resource Coordinator, and the Disaster Recovery Manager to provide a clear distinction for the types and levels of response activities that warrant a combination or modification to those roles; develop procedures for the timely activation of each role; and, ensure that these officials be provided with the necessary training to compliment their qualifications for serving in these positions.

**Page 64****Recommendation 13:**

We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency address levels of coordination and expectations with Department of Defense entities under the NRP, including Northern Command and the Military Liaison, to facilitate coordination during responses to future domestic incidents.

## ISSUE #2: REVIEW JFO STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

### *“Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared,” United States Senate*

#### **Page 20**

**Our sixth foundational recommendation is to strengthen the underpinning of the nation’s response to disasters and catastrophes.** Despite their shortcomings and imperfections, the NRP and National Incident Management System (NIMS), including the Emergency Support Function (ESF) structure currently represent the best approach available to respond to multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional emergencies. Federal, state, and local officials and other responders must commit to supporting the NRP and NIMS and working together to improve the performance of the national emergency management system. We must undertake further refinements of the NRP and NIMS, develop operational plans, and engage in training and exercises to ensure that everyone involved in disaster response understands them and is prepared to carry them out. In particular, the NRP should be strengthened to make the unity of effort concept very clear, so that everyone understands the concept and their roles in establishing unity, and there should be clarification of the importance of integrating agencies with ESF responsibilities into the ICS, rather than their operating in “stovepipes.”

#### **Chapter 12, Page 22**

##### **Establishing a Joint Field Office**

A Joint Field Office (JFO) is a coordination center that FEMA sets up, where federal, state, and local organizations with primary responsibility for disaster response can work together and coordinate the response. FEMA did not take adequate steps to set up the JFO before landfall. While the preparatory step toward a JFO – an Initial Operating Facility (IOF) – was opened pre-landfall, the JFO was not fully operational until 12 days after landfall.

#### **Chapter 12, Page 23**

The NRP should be strengthened to make the unity of effort concept very clear, so that everyone understands the concept and their roles in establishing unity. The NRP should clearly demonstrate the importance of establishing a unified command in which the principal incident management organizations – the Federal Joint Field Office (JFO), the DOD Joint Task Force (JTF), and the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – are co-located where the Incident Command System (ICS) and ESF staffs can be fully integrated.

### *“A Failure of Initiative,” United States House of Representatives*

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While DOD, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Coast Guard performed admirably in many respects, there were problems adequately coordinating their activities with other federal, state, and local agencies through the NRP structure.

For example, DOD by-passed the NRP mandated unified command, taking requests from the states directly, absent the necessary input and coordination by FEMA. This was apparent in the evacuation of the Superdome. Parr completed a plan to evacuate the Superdome Wednesday morning with the support of the Louisiana National Guard. Shortly before implementation of the plan, Parr was informed of the decision by General Honoré of Northern Command to

proceed with a different evacuation plan. Unknown to Parr, Blanco had requested DOD's involvement in the evacuation the day before. The Governor's request was made outside the unified command and without the knowledge of FEMA officials, resulting in a duplication of efforts and a delay in the evacuation. Additionally, Parr stated that the actual evacuation under Honoré's plan resulted in an additional 24 hour delay to evacuees.

In another case, HHS activated the National Disaster Medical System without prior notice or consultation with Alabama, thereby removing 200 beds from the inventory the state believed on hand, and to which state officials were still directing patients. Likewise, Coast Guard search and rescue operations were bringing survivors from Mississippi unannounced to already full hospitals until Alabama sent its own personnel forward to help triage cases and coordinate the direction of Coast Guard flights. This resulted in confusion over available hospital beds for victims through the Gulf coast and delay in the medical response.

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##### **Federal government also lacked unity of command across and within agencies.**

Like the states, the federal government also struggled to maintain unity of command across and within agencies. According to Louisiana SCO Smith, the federal government did not follow its own plan, the NRP, which calls for a unified command. In his prepared statement before the Select Committee, Smith stated "[a]nyone who was there, anyone who chose to look, would realize that there were literally three separate Federal commands." Smith's statement goes on to describe these three separate command structures:

- FCO and Joint Field Office (JFO): This was the unified joint command with the FCO (Lokey) and SCO (Smith) located initially at the state EOC, then moved to the Joint Field Office (in the old department store) once that was established. The FCO, by doctrine, is the individual that is supposed to be in charge of all federal response operations, and only the FCO has the authority to obligate federal funds.

#### ***"The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned" White House***

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##### ***NRP Concept of Operations***

When applied together, the components of the NRP should provide for a unified command structure to serve as the local, multi-agency coordination center for the effective and efficient coordination of Federal, State, local, tribal, nongovernmental, and private-sector organizations with primary responsibility for incident-related prevention, response and recovery actions. In many cases, this takes place at a Joint Field Office (JFO). The JFO co-locates the Principal Federal Official (PFO) and Federal Coordinating Officer in situations not involving multiple FCOs. In HSPD-5, the President designated the Secretary of Homeland Security as the principal Federal official for domestic incident management. The NRP allows the Secretary to delegate his responsibility, defining a PFO as the Federal official designated by the Secretary of Homeland Security to act as his/her representative locally to oversee, coordinate, and execute the Secretary's incident management responsibilities under HSPD-5 for Incidents of National Significance. The FCO, a position created by the Stafford Act, manages Federal resource support activities and is responsible for coordinating the timely delivery of Federal disaster assistance resources to affected State and local governments, individual victims, and the private

sector. At the regional level, a Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) coordinates disaster response activities until a JFO can be established.

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### ***Command and Control Within the Federal Government***

Moreover, DHS did not establish its NRP-specified disaster site multi-agency coordination center—the Joint Field Office (JFO)—until after the height of the crisis. Further, without subordinate JFO structures to coordinate Federal response actions near the major incident sites, Federal response efforts in New Orleans were not initially well coordinated.

Lastly, the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) did not function as envisioned in the NRP. First, since the ESFs do not easily integrate into the NIMS Incident Command System (ICS) structure, competing systems were implemented in the field – one based on the ESF structure and a second based on the ICS. Compounding the coordination problem, the agencies assigned ESF responsibilities did not respect the role of the PFO. As VADM Thad Allen stated, “The ESF structure currently prevents us from coordinating effectively because if agencies responsible for their respective ESFs do not like the instructions they are receiving from the PFO at the field level, they go to their headquarters in Washington to get decisions reversed. This is convoluted, inefficient, and inappropriate during emergency conditions. Time equals lives saved.”

At the most fundamental level, part of the explanation for why the response to Katrina did not go as planned is that key decision-makers at all levels simply were not familiar with the plans. The NRP was relatively new to many at the Federal, State, and local levels before the events of Hurricane Katrina. This lack of understanding of the “National” plan not surprisingly resulted in ineffective coordination of the Federal, State, and local response. Additionally, the NRP itself provides only the ‘base plan’ outlining the overall elements of a response: Federal departments and agencies were required to develop supporting operational plans and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to integrate their activities into the national response. In almost all cases, the integrating SOPs were either non-existent or still under development when Hurricane Katrina hit. Consequently, some of the specific procedures and processes of the NRP were not properly implemented, and Federal partners had to operate without any prescribed guidelines or chains of command.

Furthermore, the JFO staff and other deployed Federal personnel often lacked a working knowledge of NIMS or even a basic understanding of ICS principles. As a result, valuable time and resources were diverted to provide on-the-job ICS training to Federal personnel assigned to the JFO. This inability to place trained personnel in the JFO had a detrimental effect on operations, as there were not enough qualified persons to staff all of the required positions. We must require all incident management personnel to have a working knowledge of NIMS and ICS principles.

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For events preceded by warning, ensure we are prepared to pre-position a fully resourced and integrated interagency Federal Joint Field Office (JFO) to coordinate and, if necessary, direct Federal support to the disaster.

**Recommendations: Page 88**

**Recommendation 1b: Realign ESFs to NIMS structure.** Although the NRP base plan was predicated on the NIMS incident command system, the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) were taken from the old Federal Response Plan and were not adequately realigned to fit within the NIMS structure. The ESFs should be realigned to fit within the NIMS structure to ensure coordination and efficiency. Rather than having each ESF function independently undertaking common functions (i.e., operations, planning, logistics, finance/administration), the ESF structure should be realigned to separate operational elements from common support requirements.

**Recommendations: Page 90**

**Recommendation 7: Each Homeland Security Region must be able to establish a self-sufficient, initial JFO anywhere within the region.** The rapid establishment of a JFO is the keystone to effective Federal emergency response. It is critical that each Region have the resources, equipment, and personnel to establish a JFO after a major disaster. This JFO should be built using available State, local, and/or National Guard infrastructure. It should also be built in such a way that Federal officials can collaborate with their State and local counterparts and thereby better complement their response operations. The JFO must also be completely self-sufficient, with food, water, power, communications equipment, and housing for personnel, to enable deployment to areas where critical infrastructure are damaged or destroyed. To the extent possible for an anticipated event, the organization of the JFO should begin before the event. For a no-notice event, each region should have the ability to establish an initial JFO within 12 hours. To assist in this effort, each region should pre-identify JFO locations in areas with large populations. The ability to establish a JFO after a major disaster directly enhances the Federal government's ability to maintain continuity of operations (COOP). Each regional JFO should also identify and conduct exercises at their respective COOP sites.

**Recommendation 8: Each region must be able to establish and resource rapidly deployable, self-sustaining incident management teams (IMT) to execute the functions of the JFO and subordinate area commands that are specified in the NRP and NIMS.** The regional headquarters should create IMT's that can rapidly respond to a disaster with robust, deployable communication packages and assist in establishing the command and control structures required in NIMS and the NRP. IMTs should be composed of experts in ICS who can establish a command for the Federal response to connect with State and local response structures during disasters and large scale events. IMTs should maintain certification in all levels of ICS for each ICS command element.

**Recommendation 9: DHS should establish several strategic-level, standby, rapidly deployable interagency task forces capable of managing the national response for catastrophic incidents that span more than one Homeland Security Region.** These Joint Interagency Headquarters should be led by a senior official from a pre-designated pool of individuals with significant emergency management experience and assessed as capable of serving as the PFO for a catastrophic incident. Standard operating procedures, requisite billet structure, and training requirements for the coordination of Federal support to multiple Joint Field Offices should be developed. When stood up to support the National response to a catastrophic incident, the Joint Interagency Headquarters should be manned by an experienced incident management staff drawn from a pool of pre-designated and trained interagency

personnel, and supported with dedicated communications and transportation assets capable of self-deploying in any environment.

**Recommendations: Page 95**

**Recommendation 28: DOD should consider fully resourcing the JTF State Headquarters to address capabilities gaps and to enhance readiness.** Enhance National Guard capabilities by resourcing and fully implementing Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) State. JFHQ-State transformation is key to rapid deployment of National Guard forces in response to a catastrophe. The transformation of JFHQ-State and other National Guard capabilities for homeland security missions will ensure response forces are available in each DHS region. These capabilities should support NRP requirements including: security, maintenance, aviation, engineer, medical, communications, transportation, and logistics. The National Guard should develop rapid reaction forces capable of responding to an incident within 24 hours. This is vital to future rapid deployment of National Guard forces in response to a catastrophe. This transformation, as it nears completion, must continue to take root within DOD. JFHQ State will provide the command structure in which to lead and direct arriving Federal response capabilities, forming the backbone of State Incident Command System (ICS) and, as a result, the Federal Joint Field Office (JFO). It will facilitate unity of effort and provide the situational awareness needed for an effective response. To that end, the Command, Control, Communications, and Information (C3I) structure must be interoperable and satisfy a common set of mission essential tasks.

**Recommendations: Page 102**

**Recommendation 48: DHS should create a national search and rescue volunteer certification program.** This national certification should be used to verify the identity and the level of skills and training of search and rescue volunteers. Volunteers could report to “reception centers,” which should be established along the perimeter of any impacted area to receive spontaneous volunteers. A national certification program would speed the incorporation of these individuals into the unified search and rescue command structure and greatly increase the effectiveness of the response. Voluntary organizations such as the National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) should be requested to assist with such a certification program.

**Recommendations: Page 110**

**Recommendation 78a: Provide for a stronger Infrastructure Support Branch in the National Operations Center.** The Infrastructure Support Branch will coordinate among the appropriate ESF’s to ensure that the guidance developed by the Critical Infrastructure Policy Coordinating Committee is followed for infrastructure protection and restoration after an event. In addition, this branch will coordinate with critical infrastructure sectors, provide senior leaders with a summary of reports and modeling, and develop recommended preemptive and responsive actions to remediate or mitigate the impact of the loss of critical infrastructure. These optional actions will be based on reports from the Impact Assessment Working Group, the National Infrastructure Simulation and Analysis Center (NISAC), Sector Coordinating Councils, and consultation with DHS/IP.

**Recommendation 78b: Strengthen the role and responsibility of the Infrastructure Liaison.** Currently, the Infrastructure Liaison is designated by DHS/IP, to serve as the principal advisor to the JFO Coordination Group regarding all national and regional level critical

infrastructure and key resource incident-related issues. This role should be more clearly defined, and have greater responsibility which should include a designated group of trained critical infrastructure staff from Federal departments and agencies including DHS staff versed in infrastructure protection that are available for immediate deployment to the JFO to fill the role of the expanded Infrastructure Liaison group. The liaison should: (1) Gather and fuse relevant data about private infrastructure operational status; (2) Coordinate overall Federal response efforts for infrastructure restoration and recovery; and (3) Strengthen direct communications with private infrastructure owners and operators. This expanded Infrastructure Liaison will incorporate the Private Sector Liaisons to ensure unity of effort.

**Recommendations: Page 113**

**Recommendation 90: Prior to June 1, 2006, DOS and DHS should lead an interagency effort that will quickly develop procedures to review, accept or reject any offers of international assistance for a domestic catastrophic incident. This should include an appropriate mechanism, led by DHS and supported by DOS and Treasury, to receive, disburse, and audit any cash assistance received in support of victim needs. These operating procedures should include:**

- a. A coordination process among Federal agencies and non-governmental partners to solicit, accept, receive, integrate and distribute foreign assistance;
- b. An expedited review process for international aid that addresses both critical needs and legitimate foreign policy objectives;
- c. The inclusion of a USAID representative to the Joint Field Office (JFO);
- d. The inclusion of a representative from USAID/OFDA on the State Department Task Force and a DOS representative on USAID/OFDA's Response Management Team to improve interagency coordination; also the addition of a DHS representative to both task forces to provide more efficient information sharing about assistance needs on the ground.

***“A Performance Review of FEMA’s Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina,” DHS Office of Inspector General***

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FEMA officials experienced difficulty establishing joint, integrated operations with Louisiana's emergency management personnel. Limited space at Louisiana's EOC prevented some FEMA and state personnel from co-locating, and FEMA established an interim operating facility at a separate location where most FEMA personnel operated until the JFO was established. FEMA's FCO and Louisiana's State Coordinating Officer did not establish joint operational objectives and priorities until September 11, 2005. In addition, Louisiana's limited number of trained emergency managers impacted the integration of FEMA with state and local counterparts.



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Louisiana's ICS structure did not include geographic branches or divisions within the Operations Section. A forward operational area was not established in New Orleans until September 5, 2005, when the Deputy PFO arrived in Louisiana. According to FEMA officials, the PFO cell, which later became an Area Field Office, operated as a satellite of the JFO in Baton Rouge. While the Area Field Office was assigned an area of responsibility covering several parishes in the New Orleans area, personnel on the ground there were not delegated authority, as was the case with division supervisors in Mississippi. In contrast to Mississippi, the New Orleans Area Field Office received its action plans and operations from Baton Rouge rather than determining the needs for the area and sending requests for assistance through the JFO. The limited ICS structure and lack of unified command in Louisiana significantly undercut its response efforts.

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On August 30, 2005, Northern Command activated Joint Task Force-Katrina to coordinate the federal military response in support of the Hurricane Katrina response in Mississippi and Louisiana. Active duty troops with Joint Task Force-Katrina arrived in New Orleans on September 1, 2005, to support evacuation efforts from the Superdome. Coordination between FEMA and Joint Task Force-Katrina appeared to be lacking as several FEMA officials indicated they had no knowledge of Joint Task Force-Katrina's presence in the affected area until federal troops began arriving. Initially, troops appeared to act independently, sometimes resulting in duplication of efforts, as when different search and rescue task forces searched the same area multiple times. However, the PFO actively engaged the Joint Task Force-Katrina Commander and the Adjutant General of Louisiana's National Guard, and coordination appeared to improve. Coordination among FEMA, Joint Task Force-Katrina, the National Guard, the Department of Transportation, and others resulted in the evacuation of more than 22,000 people from the Superdome in New Orleans to multiple locations in Texas and other states in approximately four days. In addition, Joint Task Force-Katrina and National Guard troops conducted a coordinated grid search of the City of New Orleans. Through coordination with the PFO, the Joint Task Force-Katrina Commander and the Adjutant General of Louisiana, New Orleans was divided into three sections, which were searched by members of the 5th Army, 82nd Airborne, and National Guard respectively.

Some FEMA officials expressed frustration at the requirement for approval by the Secretary of Defense before Department of Defense resources could be used in support of a domestic incident response. In contrast, on-scene agency representatives from other federal agencies can approve mission assignments issued to them immediately. Officials indicated the Department of Defense approval process sometimes required 24 to 48 hours, creating delays for life saving and life sustaining missions. For example, on the evening of August 28, 2005, FEMA requested Department of Defense assistance to airlift eight California swift water rescue task forces to Louisiana. Because the Secretary of Defense must approve such requests, the order approving the airlift was not signed until August 30, 2005, and the task forces did not begin water rescue operations in Louisiana until August 31, 2005.

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**Recommendation 13:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency address levels of coordination and expectations with Department of

Defense entities under the NRP, including Northern Command and the Military Liaison, to facilitate coordination during responses to future domestic incidents.

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**Recommendation 25:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency establish clear roles and responsibilities for the Housing Area Command and define its reporting requirements and chain of command relationship with the FEMA headquarters, Joint Field Offices, and Technical Assistance Contractors.

### ISSUE #3: STRENGTHEN THE ROLE OF STATES AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

*“Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared,” United States Senate*

**Recommendations: Pages 7-9**

**Foundational Recommendation 5: Renew and Sustain Commitments at All Levels of Government to the Nation’s Emergency Management System**

***Commitment from State and Local Government.*** Although the federal government should play a more proactive role in responding to catastrophic events, when state and local officials may be overwhelmed, states and localities will continue to provide the backbone of response – the first response – for all disasters, catastrophic or not. State and local officials must take responsibility for their citizens’ welfare and conduct the planning, training and exercising that will prepare them to meet this obligation.

***Commitment Commensurate with the Mission.*** To be full partners in the national preparedness effort, states and localities will need additional resources as well. The pattern over the last three years of steadily declining funds for state and local preparedness needs to be reversed. NPRA should be given sufficient funds for homeland security and emergency management grants to assist state and local governments in developing and exercising emergency plans, providing training, and attaining and maintaining essential capabilities, such as survivable, interoperable communications. But the states and localities must do their part, as well. Every homeland security dollar, whether provided by the federal government or through state and local resources, must be spent only on those things that truly support the homeland security mission. The new NPRA regional offices should be tasked with working with states to ensure that homeland security dollar expenditures are based on the risks and needs identified for that state or locality.

***State and Local Advisory Council.*** Any attempt to develop a full-fledged national system of preparedness and response must fully integrate state and local officials into the system. There should be established an advisory council to NPRA made up of state and local officials and first responders. The advisory council should play an integral role in ensuring that the full range of activities of the new organization – including developing response plans, conducting training and exercises, formulating preparedness goals, and effectively managing grants and other resources – are done in full consultation and coordination with and take into account the needs and priorities of, states and localities.

***Better Integrate NGOs and the Private Sector.*** After Katrina struck, private companies and their employees provided important, and even life-saving, relief to citizens across the Gulf Coast region; many other companies sought to offer assistance. Yet there was no system in place to effectively incorporate many private sector resources into the response effort. Nor was there a system to efficiently incorporate important contributions from faith-based and other charitable and community organizations that sought to offer assistance.

DHS and NPRA should more fully integrate the private and nonprofit sectors into their planning and preparedness initiatives. Among other things, they should designate specific individuals at the national and regional levels to work directly with private sector organizations. Where appropriate, private sector representatives should also be included in planning, training and exercises. In all cases, advance planning for how to most effectively utilize these nongovernmental resources is essential.

## **Recommendations: Pages 26-27**

### **State and Local Preparations**

**Recommendation 73:** At least annually, state emergency preparedness offices should audit plans of agencies with ESF responsibilities under the state's emergency operations plan to ensure they: 1) take an all-hazards approach to emergency management; 2) comprehensively address the agency's ESF responsibilities; 3) are up-to-date; and 4) include provisions for regular training and exercising. Governors should require their state emergency preparedness offices to then report to them the state of the emergency preparedness office, all supporting agencies, and the state emergency operations plan. The audit should review, at a minimum:

- Realistic, comprehensive evacuation plans to provide for the safety of the state's population in a disaster, especially those who lack their own transportation or have physical, mental, or other disabilities;
- The staffing needs of agencies with emergency operations responsibilities and long range plans to attract and maintain qualified staff;
- Laws/regulations/plans to ensure clear responsibilities for ordering evacuations and to address liability issues that may be impediments to evacuation orders;
- Laws/regulations/plans that clarify the Governor's authority to assume control of emergency response where local governments' response capabilities are significantly damaged;
- Pre-contracting for emergency supplies to address needs of shelters in disaster stricken areas; plans for sheltering and then evacuating people who have remained in an area struck by a disaster; and evaluations of the capacity, suitability, and structural strength of shelters in the state;
- Plans for alternative means of distributing commodities in situations where distribution through central distribution points may not be possible;
- Plans that outline resource needs, such as volunteers for emergency support functions, transportation providers, and medical supplies, and where they will be obtained when disaster strikes;
- Plans, under ESF-9 (Urban Search and Rescue) of the state emergency operations plan, to ensure there is the appropriate equipment and resources, based on the state's terrain and risks, to effectively carry out this function; and
- Plans for ensuring the protection of vital records, whether paper or electronic, such as property titles, court case files, and driver's license and voter information.

**Recommendation 74:** States should coordinate with the NPRA to assess or upgrade their logistics management capabilities and address any asset tracking deficiencies.

**Recommendation 75:** States should coordinate through the NPRA regional offices to develop plans adequate to address shelter needs in a catastrophe or when needs exceeds a state's capacity.

**Recommendation 76:** State and local governments should review and resolve, to the extent possible, legal and operational issues incident to the issuance of evacuation orders and should be prepared to issue a mandatory evacuation order quickly in the event of a disaster.

**Recommendation 77:** States with high-risk urban areas should develop multi-phased evacuation plans that provide for the speediest evacuation of residents most at risk, particularly those who lack the means to evacuate on their own. States with high risk urban areas should consider whether a contra-flow plan is advisable, and if so, should develop agreements with bordering states to secure their participation in the contra-flow plan. Neighboring political entities should work together to coordinate evacuation plans in advance, and state and local governments should publicize their evacuation plans and ensure that citizens are familiar with one or more evacuation options. States whose location puts them at high risk of recurring hurricanes and tropical storms should use updated storm surge estimates to establish evacuation zones and evacuation clearance times. States whose locations put them at risk of other types of natural disasters should evaluate those risks and consider evacuation zones and clearance times in line with them.

**Recommendation 78:** States should develop estimates of populations that will require short term sheltering in the event of a catastrophic event. This estimate should particularly focus on special needs populations. In consultation with NPRA, states should then develop plans for providing shelter for these estimated populations. Such plans should include a way to create a voluntary database of people in the shelters so victims can be accounted for. States should develop a catastrophic medical response plan that is integrated with its evacuation and shelter plan and documents the availability of nurses and health care professionals with emergency medical and trauma training in the state.

***“A Performance Review of FEMA’s Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina,” DHS Office of Inspector General***

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**Recommendation 31:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency request appropriation or provide other funding, resources, and institutional support to agency components and to state and local partners to complete draft or proposed catastrophic planning initiatives for natural disasters.

**Pages 137-138**

Although the seven components of DHS’ National Preparedness System establish goals and targets for preparedness, they do not assess current state or federal capabilities in terms of plans, equipment, staff, training, and resources. FEMA does not currently have a system to determine when a disaster is beyond the capabilities of state and local governments; and systems to assess state capabilities remain unable to determine the point at which the state will need federal assistance. Currently, there is no baseline of preparedness for either the states or

the nation, though there have been several attempts to develop baselines. Such assessments are needed to plan response efforts and to remediate shortfalls.

Federal awareness of when an individual state will become overwhelmed and require federal support enables preparation and is essential to a rapid and seamless response. Differences in state and local capabilities translate into differences in the federal response. For example, the state of Florida's response to October 2005's Hurricane Wilma required significantly less federal support than September 2003's Hurricane Isabel response in North Carolina, though Hurricane Wilma far surpassed Hurricane Isabel in strength, damage, and mortality. North Carolina required federal commodities right away, whereas Florida supplied much of its own commodities and logistics management throughout its response to the storm. What is catastrophic for one state may not be catastrophic for another. Similarly, unpredictable disasters may render an otherwise capable state helpless by destroying essential infrastructure, including emergency response commodities. Therefore, each state and potentially any disaster may have a different trigger at which a state becomes overwhelmed. This prevents the federal government from establishing a single, national point – such as after the first 72 hours of a disaster – at which the federal government prepares to intervene.

FEMA has never had an effective system for assessing state readiness or determining a standard to which a state must be prepared. Beginning in the late 1990s, FEMA used the Capabilities Assessment for Readiness to assess state capabilities. Designed jointly by FEMA and the National Emergency Management Association, Capabilities Assessment for Readiness required states to conduct self-assessments. However, the program had flaws, including the short time frame allowed to complete assessments, limited empirical data about state capability, insufficient confidence in the validity and accuracy of the of the self-assessment process, and a lack of information from which to determine how large a disaster each state can handle on its own.

In 2002, the Emergency Management Accreditation Program replaced the Capabilities Assessment for Readiness for state assessments. The Emergency Management Accreditation Program is a non-governmental association that assesses states' emergency management capabilities. Like the Capabilities Assessment for Readiness, the Emergency Management Accreditation Program assessments rely on state self-assessments and do not calculate the scale of disaster a state can manage without federal assistance. However, the Emergency Management Accreditation Program adds on-site, peer-evaluations of state assessments to accredit states on a voluntary basis. When the management of emergency management grants transferred from FEMA to ODP, FEMA lost its authority to require state assessments and validation of them under an accreditation program. In 2005, ODP encouraged but did not require states to use Emergency Management Accreditation Program assessments. For FY 2006, ODP plans to make grant awards contingent on states using an assessment like the Emergency Management Accreditation Program, but ODP will not require accreditation.

FEMA remains involved in the state assessment process because FEMA contracts out to the Emergency Management Accreditation Program to perform the assessments in the National Emergency Management Baseline Capabilities Assurance Program (NEMB-CAP). NEMB-CAP is a one-time project to combine Emergency Management Accreditation Program state assessments into a national preparedness baseline. Begun in 2003, NEMBCAP did not meet its

2005 completion deadline. If the project is completed, the baseline will be difficult to use in comparative analysis because early assessments may no longer be current or relevant. Of the 56 states and territories eligible for assessment, only 35 (62.5 percent) have completed assessments since 2003. The NEMB-CAP results to date show insufficient state capabilities, and there does not appear to be a system to address the shortfalls. In its most recent progress report, the NEMB-CAP has demonstrated that only 2 of the 35 assessed states are fully compliant with the Emergency Management Accreditation Program standards. FEMA and ODP have not yet determined whether states that scored higher should receive additional funds because they spent previous grants effectively, or whether states that scored lower should receive additional funds because they have greater deficiencies.

**Recommendation 35:** We recommend that the Under Secretary of Preparedness for the Department of Homeland Security provide states with training on the applicability of the National Preparedness System and preparedness grants to all hazards, including natural disasters.

**Recommendation 36:** We recommend that the Under Secretary of Preparedness for the Department of Homeland Security develop a system to assess state capability to respond to a disaster, without federal assistance and in respect to a minimum level of preparedness based on the Emergency Management Accreditation Program standard.

## **ISSUE #4: STRENGTHEN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (ESF-15) AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPPORT ANNEXES**

*“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina,” White House*

### **Recommendations: Page 109**

#### **Recommendation 73: DHS should revise the NRP to improve the Public Affairs Support and External Affairs annexes to ensure a better coordinated, more effective response.**

- a. DHS should revise standing operating procedures, command relationships, training, organizational structure, and communications between Federal Public Affairs Offices (PAOs) and their State and local counterparts.
- b. DHS should revise the NRP to delineate clearly when National and Incident JICs should be required to activate and deactivate. This guidance should also determine the proper location and number of JICs to be established in response to catastrophes.
- c. DHS should revise the NRP to delineate a clear structure for a fully coordinated, integrated, and synchronized public communications strategy, across the Federal government and with State and locals.

**Recommendation 74: DHS should establish rapidly deployable Public Affairs teams, able to operate self-sufficiently, in austere conditions. These deployable Public Affairs teams should be established across all Federal departments and agencies with key Homeland Security responsibilities.** These teams should be capable of providing Public Affairs assistance within hours to incident locations. These teams could be used to form the Incident JIC. All Federal departments and agencies with domestic operational responsibilities should establish programs to use embedded media where appropriate.

#### **Recommendation 75: DHS should expand Federal partnership programs with State and local Public Affairs Officials (PAO).**

- a. DHS should strengthen its relationship with groups such as the National Governors Association to provide joint incident communications training programs for State governments.
- b. DHS should also strengthen relationships with the Defense Information School, Navy Post Graduate School, National Defense University, and other academic institutions. These Federal partners can assist in providing training and certification to State and local emergency management and the PAOs of key DHS organizations (e.g., DHS, FEMA, U.S. Coast Guard) and personnel such as PFO and Federal Coordinating Officer candidates. Such training would help to improve incident communications efforts.

**Recommendation 76: Develop a Public Communications Coordination capability for crisis communications at the White House.** Designate a senior White House Communications official to be responsible for the Homeland Security Council and crisis communications portfolio. In close collaboration with DHS’ Office of Public Affairs, this official would be responsible for:

- a. Coordination of public communications and public affairs within the homeland across all relevant Federal departments and agencies;
- b. Establishing a permanent strategic communications capability, to facilitate messages to the public, the media, and all departments and agencies;



- c. Developing a national public communications and public affairs strategic plan;
- d. Develop “Risk Communications” to communicate pre-incident expectations to private citizens. This may be carried out by identifying credible spokespersons who can frequently update the public on preparedness, current threats and crisis communications.

**Recommendations: Page 110**

**Recommendation 77: DHS should establish an integrated public alert and warning system in coordination with all relevant departments and agencies.**

- a. The system, building on the Emergency Alert System (EAS), must leverage advanced communication technologies and existing Federal, State, and local systems.
- b. Federal, State and local levels of government must have the means to communicate essential and accurate emergency information to the public prior to, during and after a catastrophe.
- c. Use the National Preparedness Goal’s Target Capabilities List as a reference to build and sustain the system.

***“A Performance Review of FEMA’s Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina”*** DHS Office of Inspector General

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**Recommendation 11:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency further develop and fully implement formal ESF-15 training, so all full-time employees and Disaster Assistance Employees have a comprehensive understanding of how to operate within its structure during an incident.

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**Recommendation 12:** We recommend that the Assistant Secretary of Public Affairs for the Department of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, complete the development of and fully implement the DHS Public Affairs state outreach program.

## **ISSUE #5: REFINE THE NRP-CIS TO INCLUDE THE REVIEW OF POSSIBLE INCREASED DOD RESPONSIBILITY**

*“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,” White House*

### **Recommendations: Page 94**

**Recommendation 22: DOD and DHS should develop recommendations for revision of the NRP to delineate the circumstances, objectives, and limitations of when DOD might temporarily assume the lead for the Federal response to a catastrophic incident.** Katrina demonstrated the importance of prior planning for rapid and complex response efforts. DOD should develop plans to lead the Federal response for events of extraordinary scope and nature (e.g., nuclear incident or multiple simultaneous terrorist attacks causing a breakdown in civil society).

**Recommendation 24: DOD and DHS should plan and prepare for a significant DOD supporting role during a catastrophic event.** DOD’s joint operational response doctrine is an integral part of the national effort and must be fully integrated into the national response at all levels of government. DOD should have a contingency role and a requirement to assist DHS with expertise in logistics, planning, and total asset visibility. DOD should coordinate with DHS and DOT to identify DOD’s contingency role in airport operations and evacuations, and the planning and use of Ready Reserve Fleet vessels for housing, evacuation, communications, command, control, and logistics. The NRP and Catastrophic Incident Supplement (CIS) should specify the specific requirements for DOD resources based on the magnitude and type of a catastrophic event.

### **Recommendations: Page 95**

**Recommendation 26: Set standards for “pushing” the pre-positioning of Federal assets to States and locals, in the case of an imminent catastrophe.** DHS should create a civil operational planning capability to push assets that is robust, agile, and deployable; otherwise, the response will rely heavily on DOD capabilities. Factors slowing delivery of commodities require review and solutions adapted prior to future disasters. DHS should include much better planning efforts between State and Federal emergency management logisticians and operations personnel, the assistance and advice of DOD strategic logistics planners, and more robust private sector partnerships. DHS should mandate the use of pre-competed private sector contracts for capabilities ranging from airlift to advanced communications and life support and have available a rapid response capability similar to DOD. Federal funding should be predicated on States entering into their own contractual agreements, pre-crisis, with the private sector for procurement and delivery of commodities.

**Recommendation 28: DOD should consider fully resourcing the JTF State Headquarters to address capabilities gaps and to enhance readiness.** Enhance National Guard capabilities by resourcing and fully implementing Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) State. JFHQ-State transformation is key to rapid deployment of National Guard forces in response to a catastrophe. The transformation of JFHQ-State and other National Guard capabilities for homeland security missions will ensure response forces are available in each DHS region. These capabilities should support NRP requirements including: security, maintenance, aviation, engineer, medical, communications, transportation, and logistics. The National Guard should

develop rapid reaction forces capable of responding to an incident within 24 hours. This is vital to future rapid deployment of National Guard forces in response to a catastrophe. This transformation, as it nears completion, must continue to take root within DOD. JFHQ State will provide the command structure in which to lead and direct arriving Federal response capabilities, forming the backbone of State Incident Command System (ICS) and, as a result, the Federal Joint Field Office (JFO). It will facilitate unity of effort and provide the situational awareness needed for an effective response. To that end, the Command, Control, Communications, and Information (C3I) structure must be interoperable and satisfy a common set of mission essential tasks.

**Recommendation 29: Develop the capability to rapidly activate a JTF-State for contingencies.** JTF-State is a forward deployed command group that can stage assets (by conducting reception, staging, onward movement, and integration); provide situational awareness and initial command and control for both State governors (for National Guard troops) and USNORTHCOM (for Federal active duty troops); and provide State level components to a Federal active duty JTF, should one be required. JTF-State coordinates with USNORTHCOM and State authorities to ensure the application of the full capability of the Joint Force for domestic response missions. A key component of the JTF-State should be the State's WMD CSTs. The option to expanding the role of the CSTs to an all-hazards response team should be explored. This may require additional resources, but would improve situational awareness and command and control capabilities at the State level. A JTF-State model streamlines the command structure exercising command and control over all assigned forces supporting civil authorities. The JTF command and control architecture should provide a wide network to build a single common operating picture that increases situational awareness and redundancy. The JTF should assume command and control of Federal active duty forces and National Guard forces from other States. As part of the JFHQ State, the JTF maintains and provides trained and equipped forces and capabilities. If and when necessary, this JTF model enables a National Guard Commander familiar with State and local area of operations to serve both in a Federal and State status providing both unity of effort and unity of command for Federal and State forces.

**Recommendations: Page 96**

**Recommendation 31: DOD should support DHS development of an analysis and operational planning capability to enable DHS to predict detailed requirements and plan for specific actions needed to respond to future disasters.** This DOD/DHS element should assess past catastrophic disasters and the successes and failures of the overall responses to those events. This information should inform detailed planning for future disaster response, and allow determination of specific decision points to aid rapid decision making. Ultimately a fully mature DHS planning capability should have additional utility by deploying during future catastrophic events and translating initial damage assessments into accurate needs assessments for local, State and Federal authorities.

***“Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared,” United States Senate***

**Recommendations: Page 15**

**Interagency Coordination**

**Recommendation 15:** DOD and DHS should improve their coordination.

- a. DOD should continue to provide experienced officers to assist DHS officials in the execution of their responsibilities during an incident or disaster;
- b. DHS and NPRA officials should receive better training as to the capabilities and authorities of DOD during an emergency;
- c. DOD should streamline its existing, cumbersome process for Mission Assignments (MAs), particularly as applied in the event of a catastrophe;
- d. Key DOD personnel who may be called to participate in DOD's response efforts should receive training on the National Response Plan, the National Incident Management System, and the Incident Command System;
- e. DOD should coordinate with the Secretary of DHS to develop a plan for commodities distribution in the event that DOD is called upon to augment DHS's commodities distribution in a catastrophic event.
- f. DOD and DHS should coordinate to expand the presence of DHS officials at U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and, as appropriate, U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), and integrate DHS officials into NORTHCOM and PACOM's planning, training, exercising, and responding to an incident or disaster.
- g. DOD and DHS should develop an inventory of assets under DOD's control that are most likely to be needed in response to a disaster in order to enable expeditious deployment should they be required. Such assets may include, for example, utility and heavy-lift helicopters, medium-lift helicopters capable of performing search-and-rescue, shallow draft boats, communications equipment, medical equipment and personnel, and engineering equipment.

***“A Performance Review of FEMA’s Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina”*** DHS Office of Inspector General

**Recommendations: Page 187**

**Recommendation 13:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency address levels of coordination and expectations with Department of Defense entities under the NRP, including Northern Command and the Military Liaison, to facilitate coordination during responses to future domestic incidents.

***“CATASTROPHIC DISASTERS: Enhanced Leadership, Capabilities, and Accountability Controls Will Improve the Effectiveness of the Nation’s Preparedness, Response, and Recovery System,”***  
GAO

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**Recommendation:** Recent GAO recommendations to DOD improve the military’s response to catastrophic natural disasters DOD should provide proposed revisions of the NRP to DHS that address the proactive functions the military is expected to perform during a catastrophic incident. DOD should establish milestones and expedite the development of detailed plans and exercises that address specifically the use of various military resources and role(s) the military might be expected to play in order to fully account for the unique capabilities and support that the military is likely to provide to civil authorities in response to the full range of domestic disasters, including catastrophic disasters. Plans and exercise should address the use of (1) reconnaissance, communication and search and rescue capabilities; (2) active and reserve forces; and (3) possible logistics role for the military. DOD should direct the National Guard

Bureau to work with state governors to develop and maintain a list of types of capabilities the National Guard will likely provide in response to domestic natural disasters.

## **ISSUE #6: REVISE THE NATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN TO CONFORM TO THE NEW NATIONAL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

*“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,” White House*

### **Recommendations: Pages 96**

**Recommendation 33: DHS should complete the review of National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) communications policy by April 30, 2006.** As requested by the Homeland Security Council and the National Security Council, DHS should conduct this review to provide a preliminary strategic “plan for integrating communications for all levels of crisis in light of evolving threats and new and converging technologies, and for organizational and policy changes.” This review and resulting strategic plan will advance communications capability planning for the Nation’s response posture.

### **Recommendations: Pages 96-97**

**Recommendation 34: HSC and OSTP should lead an interagency review of all current policies, laws, plans, and strategies that address communications and integrate them into a National Emergency communications Strategy.** The review should include:

- a. The development of an overarching National Emergency Communications Strategy should address a full range of hazards;
- b. A national emergency communications strategy should consider the direction of the telecommunications industry and supporting recommendations of the President’s National Security Telecommunications Advisory Council;
- c. State and local emergency prevention, preparedness, and response personnel must maximize the resources provided by, and implement the procedures contained in, the Homeland Security Grant Program;
- d. Federal, State, and local entities should use the Target Capabilities List (TCL) as a reference to develop emergency communications strategies. The resulting strategies will enhance operability and support future interoperable emergency communications capabilities. State and local standards and performance measures for achieving for interoperability should be tied to Homeland Security Grant Program funding criteria;
- e. By March 1, 2006, HSC and OSTP should organize an interagency group to begin the development of a national emergency communications strategy. An interim strategy, to be completed May 31, 2006, should provide sufficient guidance and direction to address the deficiencies identified in the Hurricane Katrina response.

### **Recommendations: Pages 97**

**Recommendation 35: DHS should revise the NRP to conform to the new National Emergency Communications Strategy.** The NRP should include sufficient guidance on communications operations when responding to a disaster. This guidance should address the full spectrum of possible effects to the Nation’s communications system from disasters and detail the required responses. It should also ensure that response operations employ all available communications assets to support operability and interoperability. The following areas should be addressed as part of the revision of the NRP:

- a. Communications procedures and guidelines need to be defined, implemented, and practiced through simulations and exercises. Measurement of progress to increase overall crisis communications capability will be graded against the President's Management Agenda criteria;
- b. Updated communications guidance must also emphasize the ability of emergency responders and private security officials to share information and use available communication systems to connect with authorities at all levels of government. Planning needs to cover not only system connectivity, but also operating practices, business processes, and initial data sets to make the system work;
- c. The NRP's ESF-2 must direct the integration of all available Federal, State, local, and private communications assets. The full integration of communications capability requires an assessment of Federal assets and an inventory of available capability. During emergencies, ESF-2 must have the authority to implement, resource, and restore communications;
- d. State and local first responders must satisfy the requirements of the Target Capabilities List, in order to receive Federal funding.

## **ISSUE #7: REVIEW PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY (ESF#13) ROLES AND MISSION**

***“A Nation Still Unprepared,” United States Senate***

### **Recommendations: Page 13**

**Recommendation 13:** DHS should amend the NRP to designate which agency should have primary responsibility for ESF-13 (Public Safety and Security) in which circumstances, and clarify relationships between the Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official (SFLEO) designation and ESF-13 functions described in the annex.

### **Chapter 25-3 – 25-20: Public Safety and Security (Excerpts):**

The National Response Plan’s Emergency Support Function 13 assigns the Department of Homeland Security and the Justice Department jointly to lead the federal government’s public safety and security efforts. This is the only ESF for which two agencies are designated as both Coordinators and Primary Agencies, and the results of that joint assignment in Katrina show the wisdom of the unitary assignments for the other ESFs. As if to prove the conventional wisdom: by assigning this responsibility to more than one entity, the NRP effectively ensured that no one took charge. Because the NRP is silent on the issue of how to resolve leadership issues, DHS and DOJ neither coordinated with each other prior to Katrina, nor independently planned for carrying out their ESF-13 functions. As a result, the days immediately prior to and after landfall were spent figuring out precisely how to implement the ESF-13 responsibilities, rather than actually fully implementing them.

Further adding to the confusion created by the NRP’s joint delegation to DHS and DOJ of its ESF-13 responsibilities is another part of the NRP, which creates a position entitled “Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official” or SFLEO. According to the NRP, the SFLEO “is the senior law enforcement official from the agency with primary jurisdictional responsibility as directed by statute, Presidential directive, existing Federal policies, and/or the Attorney General.” The SFLEO directs intelligence/investigative law enforcement operations in a national incident, such as terrorism, a national security special event, or disaster. The NRP states that “[i]n the event of a terrorist incident, this official will normally be the FBI SAC,” but it doesn’t specify who takes the post after a natural disaster. The jockeying for law enforcement position, is a reflection of the failure to engage in pre-incident planning for a federal law enforcement role at least in response to a national disaster, and played a role in this delay.

The NRP offers no insight into how the SFLEO is supposed to interact or coordinate with the ESF-13 agencies, or why two agencies are charged with primary and coordinating responsibility under ESF-13. These ambiguities, as well as delay by both DHS and DOJ in designating an SFLEO, further contributed to the untimeliness of the federal public safety response and impeded the strategic coordination of incoming federal law enforcement resources. It further reflects the failure to engage in adequate, if any, prevent planning for a federal law enforcement role in response to a natural disaster.



*“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,” White House*

**Recommendations: Pages 102-103**

**Recommendation 49: DHS should, in coordination with DOJ, revise the National Response Plan to provide more effective coordination of the law enforcement response to a disaster by clarifying and expanding the role and mission of the Public Safety and Security support function and the Senior Federal Law Enforcement Officer. The revised NRP should:**

- a. **Designate DOJ as the primary agency responsible for the ESF-13 Public Safety and Security function.** The NRP designates DHS and DOJ to serve jointly as primary agencies for the ESF-13 function. This diffusion of responsibility creates unnecessary confusion at the scene of the crisis and violates the principle of unity of command. We recognize that DHS has significant law enforcement assets, both in Washington DC and in field offices throughout the country. However, the Attorney General is, by law, the President’s primary law enforcement officer. DOJ’s long experience and recognized public law enforcement responsibility for prosecuting Federal crimes, in addition to its existing ties with the State and local law enforcement communities, make it best positioned to assume the lead role, though it still must continue to work in partnership with DHS. Through its United States Attorneys Offices in all 50 states and through the FBI’s 100 Joint Terrorism Task Forces, DOJ has the capability to leverage these important relationships with State and local law enforcement. We also consider DOJ to have greater traditional law enforcement experience, whereas DHS’s law enforcement programs are more specialized, focusing on areas such as border control, aviation security, and protective services. In addition, giving DOJ responsibility for leading the Public Safety and Security support function will let DHS focus on its overall coordination of emergency response mission.
- b. **Finalize the drafting of Public Safety and Security policies and procedures.** The Public Safety and Security (ESF-13) Annex of the NRP required primary and support agencies to define their functions and develop policies and procedures by April 2005, four months after the NRP was issued. While drafts exist, this effort needs immediate completion to provide clarity to the organization and functions of the Public Safety and Security support function.
- c. **Specify that the Attorney General will, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, designate the SFLEO.** When the Secretary of Homeland Security declares an Incident of National Significance (INS), the Attorney General should promptly designate the SFLEO; during a non-INS event, the Attorney General may appoint an SFLEO if needed. Also, the NRP should give the Attorney General the authority to designate a Deputy SFLEO from a department other than that of the SFLEO. In recognition of the Secretary of Homeland Security’s role in coordinating the Federal response under HSPD-5, the Attorney General should consult with the Secretary prior to designating the SFLEO.
- d. **Include a new position designated as the “Senior Civilian Representative of the Attorney General” (SCRAG).** As with the SFLEO, the Attorney General should immediately appoint the SCRAG to serve as the Attorney General’s representative for issues requiring senior-level involvement of a DOJ official. Whereas the SFLEO is responsible for managing the operational aspects of the Federal law enforcement

response, the SCRAG will assist as needed in resolving any significant law enforcement policy issues that might arise with State or local officials, or between Federal official.

- e. **Require the establishment of a law enforcement coordination center within the Joint Field Office (JFO) to coordinate the Federal, State, and local law enforcement response during all types of emergencies.** While the NRP includes such an entity for a terrorist-related incident or a National Special Security Event, it does not clearly set forth how Federal law enforcement coordinates with its State and local counterparts during other incidents.

### **Recommendations: Page 103**

**Recommendation 50: DOJ should lead the development of the capability to surge Federal law enforcement resources in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.** As outlined by the NRP, law enforcement personnel should be drawn from the following sources, in this order: 1) Civilian law enforcement and National Guard from affected State; 2) Civilian law enforcement and National Guard from other States; and 3) Civilian law enforcement from Federal agencies. To maximize the availability of law enforcement assets from each of these categories, the following should be done:

- a. **DOJ should establish a program to review State and local plans for continuity of operations for law enforcement and the criminal justice system during a crisis.**
- b. **DOJ should develop a program to increase States' awareness of the procedures for requesting Federal law enforcement assistance under the Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Act.**
- c. **DOJ should lead an interagency effort to catalogue the Federal law enforcement assets within the Executive Branch.** This effort will serve as the basis for developing a database of assets available for use during an INS, in order to ensure appropriate use of all available Federal law enforcement assets.
- d. **DOJ and DHS should each develop, in coordination with the other, the capability to rapidly deploy a contingent of Federal law enforcement officers to prevent and respond to civil disorder.** Consistent with the principle that law enforcement is the responsibility of local and State governments, this force should deploy only in the event that State authorities request Federal assistance pursuant to the Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Act, or as otherwise directed by the President. However, the NRP should make clear that where, as in this case, the need for additional law enforcement resources is manifest and obvious, it should be the Attorney General's responsibility, after notifying the Secretary of Homeland Security, to make an offer of Federal law enforcement support to the affected Governor.

### **Recommendations: Pages 103-104**

**Recommendation 51: DOJ should develop procedures for streamlined deputization of qualified Federal law enforcement officers.** This effort should address circumstances where Federal law enforcement personnel require *Federal* deputization to enforce Federal laws outside their jurisdiction, or *State* deputization to enforce State laws. DOJ should work together with the States' Attorneys General to develop agreements whereby a State requesting Federal law enforcement assistance agrees in advance to grant limited State law enforcement authority to Federal agents for the duration of the emergency.

**Recommendations: Page 104**

**Recommendation 52: DOJ should, in coordination with DHS, further incorporate force protection into Federal response planning, to prevent disruption of Federal agencies' operations and to protect Federal personnel and property.** While the Public Safety and Security annex of the NRP designates force protection as an ESF-13 responsibility, further response planning is required on this issue in light of the problems encountered during Hurricane Katrina.

## **ISSUE #8: REVIEW THE COORDINATING, PRIMARY, AND SUPPORT AGENCIES FOR ALL ANNEXES**

*“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,” White House*

### **Recommendations: Page 108**

**Recommendation 69: Designate HUD as the lead Federal agency for the provision of temporary housing.** HUD, with extensive experience providing housing resources for those in need, must use its extensive network of regional offices and State and local housing agencies, to prepare for potential relocation emergencies. While there will always be a need for some victims to remain on their property while rebuilding their homes, the provision of trailers should not be the default means of temporary housing offered to all evacuees leaving shelters. HUD, rather than DHS, should be the lead Federal agency for housing and HUD should devote resources to gain this competency with support from ARC, and other Federal agencies. HUD must create a professional staff to augment its current housing capacity in order to create the ability to arrange housing for disaster victims and adequately train, exercise and resource this capability. But, DHS should retain its vital coordinating function for the entire disaster response. It should be understood that the development of these capabilities will take time and in most cases will be grown to full capacity incrementally.

### **Recommendations: Page 112**

**Recommendation 88: DHS should jointly lead DOD/USACE, DOI, USDA, and EPA to address and coordinate debris removal issues as part of ESF operational procedures. The procedures should include an integrated public communication approach for debris removal, especially as it applies to private property.**

### **Recommendations: Page 113**

**Recommendation 89: DOS should lead the revision of the International Coordination Support Annex to the NRP, clarifying responsibilities of DOS, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), DOD, and other supporting agencies in response to domestic incidents.** This revision should begin immediately.

### **Recommendations: Page 114**

**Recommendation 95: DHS and DOS should revise the NRP to include DOD and USDA-Food Safety Inspection Service as cooperating agencies to the International Coordination Support Annex.** Including DOD more directly in foreign assistance management would leverage existing relationships with partner military establishments and help to ensure that staging areas for the acceptance of foreign aid are preplanned and quickly available.

*“A Performance Review of FEMA’s Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina,” Office of Inspector General*

### **Recommendations: Pages 186-187**

**Recommendation 4:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency establish an ESF-6 working group to define the explicit roles and responsibilities for each agency, develop standard operating procedures, and implement a concept of operations plan for response activities that address all levels of disasters.

**Recommendation 8:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Policy, review ESF-9 Annex capabilities for search and rescue and coordination within FEMA and other Department of Homeland Security components (such as U.S. Coast Guard and Customs and Border Protection) or with other federal departments and agencies, and either redistribute ESF-9 responsibilities or develop greater water rescue capabilities within FEMA.

**Recommendation 9:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Policy, develop a surge plan and standard operating procedures for augmenting FEMA's ESF-9 coordination capability during catastrophic events with resources such as the U.S. Coast Guard and Customs and Border Protection personnel.

**Recommendation 10:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Policy, develop a definitive ESF-15 organizational chart that is scalable to the size of an incident, with a clear hierarchical structure and information flow.

**Recommendation 11:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency further develop and fully implement formal ESF-15 training, so all full time employees and Disaster Assistance Employees have a comprehensive understanding of how to operate within its structure during an incident.

**Recommendation 13:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency address levels of coordination and expectations with Department of Defense entities under the NRP, including Northern Command and the Military Liaison, to facilitate coordination during responses to future domestic incidents.

***“CATASTROPHIC DISASTERS: Enhanced Leadership, Capabilities, and Accountability Controls Will Improve the Effectiveness of the Nation’s Preparedness, Response, and Recovery System,”***  
GAO

**Page 26**

**Recommendation:** New GAO recommendation to DHS for detailed and robust implementation plans for the NRP. DHS should direct that the NRP base plan and its Catastrophic Incident Annex be supported by more robust and detailed operational implementation plans, particularly the Catastrophic Incident Supplement to the NRP. Such operational plans should, for example, further define and leverage those military capabilities that might be needed in a catastrophic disaster.

## **ISSUE #9: IMPROVE PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING AND ACCEPTING DONATED GOODS**

### ***“A Nation Still Unprepared,” United States Senate***

#### **Recommendations: Page 16**

**Recommendation 23:** DHS should coordinate with the private sector and NGOs at the state, regional, and national level to incorporate those entities, where appropriate, into their planning, training, and exercises, to the greatest extent possible.

#### **Recommendations: Page 17**

**Recommendation 25:** DHS should develop a policy for accepting and directing corporate in kind donations. The U.S. Department of State, in coordination with DHS, should develop a policy for accepting and directing foreign donations.

### ***“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,” White House***

#### **Recommendations: Page 114**

**Recommendation 98:** DHS should revise the NRP to designate responsibility for coordinating non-governmental assistance, including faith-based organizations, during emergencies. These responsibilities should fully address the following:

- a. Improve communication of requirements from the incident site;
- b. Pre-identify and catalogue non-governmental goods and build a process to deploy these goods to specific regions for catastrophic events;
- c. Develop a statewide support function for volunteers (both pre-trained and spontaneous) in each State to assist local emergency managers and NGOs to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters;
- d. Recruit, train and identify National Incident Management System (NIMS) trained volunteers;
- e. Incorporate NGOs into the planning, training, and exercising process; and
- f. Ensure there is a mechanism to coordinate spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers.

## **ISSUE #10: ENSURE THE INTEGRATION OF ALL FEDERAL SEARCH AND RESCUE ASSETS**

***“Catastrophic Incidents: Enhanced Leadership, Capabilities, and Accountability Controls Will Improve the Effectiveness of the Nation’s Preparedness, Response, and Recovery System,” GAO***

**Catastrophic Disasters.** While the NRP acknowledged the existence of the National Search and Rescue Plan, the NRP did not specifically address how the Coast Guard and the Air Force organizational responsibilities in the National Search and Rescue Plan coincided with the NRP’s urban search and rescue annex. In addition, the National Search and Rescue Plan had not been updated to reflect the NRP. As a result of the lack of clear search and rescue guidance, the aviation portion of military search and rescue operations was not fully integrated with the helicopter search and rescue operations of the Coast Guard and other rescuers. Moreover, no one had the total picture of the missions that had been resourced and the missions that still needed to be performed during the response to Hurricane Katrina.

Second, the military mounted a massive response to Hurricane Katrina that saved many lives and greatly assisted recovery efforts. However, the NRP made little distinction between the military response to smaller, regional disasters and the military response to large-scale, catastrophic natural disasters even though past disasters had shown that the military tends to play a much larger role in catastrophes. We found a lack of understanding within the military and among federal, state, and local responders as to the types of assistance and capabilities that DOD might provide in the event of a catastrophe—for example, timely damage assessments or communications capabilities—the timing of this assistance, and the respective contributions of the active-duty and National Guard forces. For example, neither the NRP, DHS, nor DOD had fully identified the military’s extensive reconnaissance assets or communications capabilities that could be brought to bear in a catastrophe. In the absence of this planning, some of the military’s available assets were never requested or proactively deployed.

***“Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared,” United States Senate***

### **Recommendations: Page 14**

**Recommendation 14:** Reviewing, Aligning and Improving the Stafford Act, the National Response Plan, and the National Incident Management System. The NRP should be revised to reflect the broad range of search and rescue requirements that may arise in a disaster or catastrophe. ESF-9 (currently Urban Search and Rescue) should be expanded to encompass the multiple environments and requirements that may arise in a disaster or catastrophe, and should designate the appropriate lead agency and supporting agencies, as determined by the nature of the disaster.

### **Recommendations: Page 22**

**Recommendation 51:** Signatory agencies to the National Search and Rescue Plan should develop a comprehensive plan for search and rescue in a multi-environment disaster. The plan should provide for a unified coordination structure, with subordinate coordination of air, land, and water-borne assets, and should establish the means for obtaining the necessary assets and personnel. The plan should also provide for a unified communications network, a common grid

reference system, and standardized procedures and methods for utilizing and sharing local situational awareness acquired by search and rescue operational units.

**Recommendations: Page 22**

**Recommendation 52:** Policies, plans, and procedures, as defined by the National Search and Rescue Plan, need to be incorporated into personnel recovery training at the operational and strategic levels of NORTHCOM so that DOD can more effectively participate in future domestic mass rescue operations.

***“A Performance Review of FEMA’s Disaster Management Activities In Response to Hurricane Katrina,” DHS Office of Inspector General***

**Page 188**

**Recommendation 8:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Policy, review ESF-9 Annex capabilities for search and rescue and coordination within FEMA and other Department of Homeland Security components (such as U.S. Coast Guard and Customs and Border Protection) or with other federal departments and agencies, and either redistribute ESF-9 responsibilities or develop greater water rescue capabilities within FEMA.

**Recommendation 9:** We recommend that the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Policy, develop a surge plan and standard operating procedures for augmenting FEMA’s ESF-9 coordination capability during catastrophic events with resources such as the U.S. Coast Guard and Customs and Border Protection personnel.

***“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,” White House***

**Recommendations: Page 101**

**Recommendation 44:** DHS should lead an interagency team to review and revise the NRP to ensure the integration of all Federal search and rescue assets. This review should:

- a. Expand ESF-9 to ensure the coordination of all Federal search and rescue operations, not just urban search and rescue.** Under this new construct, both the urban and civil search and rescue coordinators would report to the Operations Section Chief under the Incident Commander. This structure is consistent with the National Search and Rescue Plan (NSP) requirement for the civil search and rescue coordinator to serve as the search and rescue representative to the Incident Commander, as well as with NIMS and ICS principles that place both urban search and rescue and civil search and rescue under the Operations Section. It would allow both coordinators to support each other and share resources, depending on the nature of the incident. Ideally, the ESF-9 coordinator in the Joint Field Office (JFO) should have extensive training and education in both urban search and rescue and civil search and rescue.
- b. Require coordination throughout Incident Command to ensure continuity of care for those rescued.** The ESF-9 coordinator should work with the logistics section under ESF-5: Emergency Management and the other ESF’s grouped under the Emergency



Services Branch (including ESF-8: Public Health and Medical Services) to ensure victims receive medical care and are transported to an adequate housing shelter.

- c. **ESF-9 must include the United States Forest Service's (USFS), DOI and EPA capabilities to perform search and rescue operations.** USFS is given the role as primary agency under ESF-4: Firefighting and as supporting agency under ESF-9. DOI is a principal partner with USFS in carrying out ESF-4 functions. As firefighters make up a large percentage of FEMA Urban Search and Rescue teams, their expertise and capabilities should also contribute to search and rescue operations. Under ESF-9, the mission statements of USFS and DOI should include the availability of firefighting personnel, not just equipment and supplies, for use in search and rescue operations. ESF-9 must include the capabilities of all participants in the National Search and Rescue Committee.

**Recommendation 45: The National Search and Rescue Committee should revise the National Search and Rescue Plan (NSP) to include disaster response operations.** The NRP references the NSP as a supporting operational document. However, the NSP is confusing because it specifically states that it does not cover overall response to disaster operations, as called for in the NRP. The NSP should therefore be revised to clarify its role in disaster response operations. The revision should specifically address air traffic control and coordination.

**Recommendation 46: Each State and major city should incorporate Search and Rescue and US&R annexes into their overall disaster response plans.** Federal grant assistance should require each State, under the State Homeland Security Grant Program, and urban area under the Urban Areas Security Initiative, develop a search and rescue annex within its specific disaster response plan, as part of its concept of operations. This search and rescue annex should be scalable, modular, organized along ICS principles, and be all-hazards in scope. It should also specifically delineate which agencies have primary responsibility for each aspect of search and rescue. The plan should specify in what order Federal assistance assets or State-to-State mutual aid assets (through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact) will be requested and detail how search and rescue coordination will be integrated into incident command. These search and rescue annexes should identify where victims are to be taken in the event Federal, State, and local logistical support to the victims is required. Representatives of National Search and Rescue committee organizations should assist the development of State and local search and rescue plans.

## ISSUE #11: CLARIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

### *“A Nation Still Unprepared” United States Senate*

#### **Recommendations: Page 17**

**Recommendation 25:** DHS should develop a policy for accepting and directing corporate in-kind donations. The U.S. Department of State, in coordination with DHS, should develop a policy for accepting and directing foreign donations.

### *“Catastrophic Incidents: Enhanced Leadership, Capabilities, and Accountability Controls Will Improve the Effectiveness of the Nation’s Preparedness, Response, and Recovery System,” GAO*

#### **Recommendations: Page 78**

**Recommendation:** DHS and DOD, in consultation with the Department of State, establish within the NRP—or other appropriate plans—clearly delineated policies and procedures for the acceptance, receipt, and distribution of international assistance to improve the policies, procedures, planning, and oversight of international cash and in-kind donations to the U.S. government in response to disasters.

### *“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,” White House*

#### **Recommendations: Page 113**

**Recommendation 91:** DHS should lead an interagency effort to create and routinely update a prioritized list of anticipated disaster needs for foreign assistance and a list of items that cannot be accepted. These lists should be completed before June 1, 2006. These lists would be based upon notional planning scenarios, State/local emergency managers’ anticipated requirements, and current legal impediments on prohibited forms of aid. Once complete, DHS should distribute these lists to all appropriate agencies, to include regulatory agencies, in order to address regulatory barriers in advance.

#### **Recommendations: Page 114**

**Recommendation 94b:** The Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security should, before June 1, 2006, jointly develop procedures to ensure that the needs of foreign missions are included in domestic plans for tracking inquiries regarding persons who are unaccounted for in a disaster zone. In improving their strategies for providing faster information and assistance to American citizens, Federal, State, and local emergency management officials should include provisions covering the needs of affected foreign nationals. To ensure these provisions meet U.S. legal obligations under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, these officials should work with DOS. DOS in turn should inform foreign missions about these provisions. This should be accomplished through changes to the NRP, and through refinement of agencies’ NRP implementation plans.

**Recommendation 95:** DHS and DOS should revise the NRP to include DOD and USDA-Food Safety Inspection Service as cooperating agencies to the International Coordination Support Annex. Including DOD more directly in foreign assistance management would leverage existing relationships with partner military establishments and help to ensure that staging areas for the acceptance of foreign aid are preplanned and quickly available.

## **ISSUE #12: INCORPORATION OF ANIMAL COMPANION EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

***“Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared,” United States Senate***

### **Recommendations: Page 22**

**Recommendation 50:** DHS should encourage individuals, and state and local governments to plan for the evacuation and sheltering of pets.

- Due to various health, safety, and other concerns, pets may be separated from their owners during transportation or sheltering. State and local agencies should work with animal welfare organizations to develop procedures for animal identification and processing to facilitate the return of the pets to their owners.
- State and local agencies should establish memorandums of understanding with animal welfare organizations to ensure their assistance with the transport, sheltering, and rescue of pets.
- State and local evacuation plans should include consideration of transportation and sheltering of pets owned by residents in need of transportation or shelter themselves.

## **ISSUE #13: INTEGRATION OF NIMS CONCEPTS, PRINCIPLES, TERMINOLOGY, AND ORGANIZATION PROCESSES INTO THE REVISED NRP**

### ***“A Nation Still Unprepared,” United State Senate***

#### **Recommendations: Pages 9-10**

**Foundational Recommendation 6: Strengthen the Plans and Systems for the Nation’s Response to Disasters and Catastrophes.** Despite their shortcomings and imperfections, the National Response Plan (NRP) and National Incident Management System (NIMS), including the ESF structure that has taken years to develop, currently represent the best approach available to respond to multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional emergencies of any kind, and should be retained and improved. Federal, state and local officials and other responders must commit to supporting the NRP and NIMS and working together to improve the performance of the national emergency management system. We must undertake further refinements of the NRP and NIMS, develop operational plans, and engage in training and exercises to ensure that everyone involved in disaster response understands them and is prepared to carry them out.

The NRP should be amended to add an Emergency Support Function (ESF) responsible for assessing the damage to critical infrastructure, taking measures to mitigate the impact on the economy and national security, and restoring critical infrastructure. DHS should be responsible for leading this ESF, but it should have the involvement of the private sector, other federal agencies, and state and local governments, as appropriate.

Successfully implementing the NIMS during a disaster or catastrophe requires a true unity of effort. We saw in Katrina that a unity of effort generates much better outcomes than the lack thereof. The NRP should be strengthened to make the unity of effort concept very clear, so that everyone understands the concept and their roles in establishing unity. The NRP should clearly demonstrate the importance of establishing a unified command in which the principal incident management organizations – the Federal Joint Field Office (JFO), the DOD Joint Task Force (JTF), and the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – are co-located where the Incident Command System (ICS) and ESF staffs can be fully integrated. The NRP should also be revised to further clarify the importance of integrating agencies with ESF responsibilities into the ICS, rather than their operating in “stovepipes.” Agencies should not function as independent “cells,” but should be represented by functional areas throughout the ICS. For example, agency representatives working on transportation issues should be sitting together, whether they are from DOT, NPRA, or DOD. Likewise, agencies supporting ESF-13 (Public Safety and Security), which may include the DOJ, NPRA, the Coast Guard, and the State Police, should all be physically located and working together in a unity of effort.

#### **Recommendations: Page 13**

**Recommendation 8:** The NRP should be reviewed and revised to provide clear guidance to federal agencies and clear information to state, local and tribal officials, private sector organizations and nongovernmental organizations, eliminating ambiguities. The NRP should be a clear and accessible document that can be readily understood by those preparing for or participating in the response to a disaster. DHS should build commitment to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) from federal, state, and local, officials and other responders.

**ISSUE #14: REVISE THE NRP TO ADDRESS SITUATIONS THAT RENDER STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS INCAPABLE OF AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE.**

*“The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned,” White House*

**Recommendations: Page 88**

**Recommendation 1.a: Revise the NRP to address situations that render State and local governments incapable of an effective response.** The NRP does not adequately anticipate that the Federal government may need to temporarily assume some inherently State and local responsibilities and augment State and local incident command staff during a catastrophic incident. The Federal government should develop plans to build and temporarily command the ICS until the local or State authorities are able to recover from the initial impact of the catastrophic incident and perform their roles under ICS. These plans should utilize any available State or local assets that may remain operational and necessarily require collaborative planning between Federal, State, and local authorities. These revisions should also be incorporated into the NRPCIA and CIS. This effort should be part of the 90 day interagency review effort.

**Recommendations: Page 95**

**Recommendation 26: Set standards for “pushing” the pre-positioning of Federal assets to States and locals, in the case of an imminent catastrophe.** DHS should create a civil operational planning capability to push assets that is robust, agile, and deployable; otherwise, the response will rely heavily on DOD capabilities. Factors slowing delivery of commodities require review and solutions adapted prior to future disasters. DHS should include much better planning efforts between State and Federal emergency management logisticians and operations personnel, the assistance and advice of DOD strategic logistics planners, and more robust private sector partnerships. DHS should mandate the use of pre-competed private sector contracts for capabilities ranging from airlift to advanced communications and life support and have available a rapid response capability similar to DOD. Federal funding should be predicated on States entering into their own contractual agreements, pre-crisis, with the private sector for procurement and delivery of commodities.